

Minutes of Special Meeting of February 18, 2014

One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, CA

CALL TO ORDER 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Braunstein, Stone, Lieberman

STAFF PRESENT: City Clerk Cook

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Perry Kennan, Belmont resident, requested that an item to address road conditions be added to the March 25th City Council agenda.

Interview Candidates for Mosquito and Vector Control District and the Finance Commission, and Consider Appointments

Discussion ensued regarding the panel format for interviews.

Mayor Lieberman explained his desire to handle interviews in a group format. He stated that that he would give councilmembers the latitude to ask specific questions and the applicants can be encouraged to engage in discussion. He noted that the agenda provides the opportunity to make appointments tonight if desired. He expressed the need to discuss expectations and the role of commissioners.

Interview Candidates for Mosquito and Vector Control District

Candidates Judy King, Steve Hayes, and Wade Leschyn arrived for the panel interview. Mayor Lieberman explained the new process to the candidates.

Ms. King stated that she applied because she was fearful that no one would apply. She stated that although she does not know a great deal about the District, she expressed the importance of the representation of the City of Belmont at the District. She outlined two positive experiences she has had with the District with regard to pest abatement. She pointed out that the information available on the District's website is not very useful. She suggested that the District could have a presence at City events. She noted that as a long-term former member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, she is well versed on working as part of group. She is dependable and can report concisely.

Mr. Leschyn indicated that he has a degree in biology, although he works in technology and also as a substitute science teacher. He developed an interest in bugs while mushroom hunting. He has been involved in working with kids through Scouts, and has taken groups to the Mosquito and Vector Control District on a field trip. He connected with the District when he developed a pond on his property and needed to acquire mosquito fish. He pointed out that there could be education opportunities for the District to do outreach, including on other areas addressed by the District, such as Lyme disease.

Mr. Hayes outlined his financial background. He indicated that he would have the ability to communicate between District and the City Council. He suggested that the District needs to connect more to the taxpayers who fund it, and concurred regarding the outreach at public events. He pointed out that the deficiencies that led to the District's embezzlement case have been addressed.

The interview process ensued.

RECESS: 7:50 P.M.

RECONVENE: 7:55 P.M.

Councilmember Braunstein stated that all three candidates bring strong aspects to the position, and that two of the three candidates applied to ensure that the position was filled. He noted that Mr. Leschyn is the strongest candidate. Council concurred.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Braunstein, seconded by Councilmember Stone, Consideration of Resolution 2014-024 Appointing Wade Leschyn to the San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control District for a vacant term expiring in December of 2014 was unanimously approved (3-0, Reed absent).

Interview Candidates for Finance Commission

Discussion ensued regarding the approach to questions of Finance Commission candidates. Mayor Lieberman indicated that he has had discussions with Finance Director Fil regarding how the Finance Commission can add more value.

Perry Kennan, Belmont resident, pointed out that the Finance Commission is not the most challenging assignment. He stated that the Commission has been a rubber stamp for the budget. He expressed support for expanding the role and mission of the Finance Commission.

Finance Commission candidates Tran Tran, Delores Homisak, and Steve Hayes arrived for the panel interview. (Note: Incumbent Dick Ashby was not present for the interview.)

Ms. Tran indicated that she is a CPA (Certified Public Accountant) but is not practicing at this time. She applied for the Finance Commission because she wanted to get involved and would like to be part of a solution. She noted that she attended her first meeting and is looking forward to interacting with other commissioners.

Ms. Homisek indicated that her children have grown, and she has free time even though she is still working. She described her participation in the past on school site councils, and that being involved in the allocation of funding is instrumental in how things get done. She described her business experience of twenty years wherein she managed budget, managed staff, and performed forecasting and analysis. She expressed support for expanding the role of the commission.

Mr. Hayes indicated that he is retired after 35 years in finance. He outlined his experience in budget planning, auditing, and reporting. He suggested simplifying the budget reporting for the public and indicated that it needs to be simplified. He advised that he has communicated with Finance Director Fil regarding suggestions for improvements. He looks forward to working on projects and identifying potential revenue improvements. He discussed the potential Crystal Springs Uplands School project and pointed out that people were swayed based on bad information. He discussed infrastructure needs and stated that people need to understand the need for improvement.

The interview process ensued.

RECESS: 9:00 P.M.
RECONVENE: 9:05 P.M.

Councilmember Stone stated that he was impressed with Steve Hayes, since he pays attention and knows what's going on. He pointed out that Mr. Hayes provided feedback to staff in a professional manner. He indicated that he worked with Incumbent Commissioner Dick Ashby on the infrastructure ad hoc committee and was impressed. He pointed out that Mr. Ashby was willing to call into the meeting on vacation. He has done a good job. He noted that Ms. Tran and Ms. Homisak are very qualified, and pointed out that Ms. Homisak has more experience, especially in a public company.

Mayor Lieberman stated that he fully expected to reappoint Mr. Ashby, who has participated in a number of areas and is a strong member of the Finance Commission. He pointed out that he is not concerned that Mr. Ashby was not able to attend the interview. He expressed his appreciation regarding the communication from Mr. Hayes to Finance Director Fil. He pointed out that Ms. Homisak has experience with a public company and compliance with certain regulations related to that. He expressed concern regarding the level of importance Ms. Tran places on budget review.

Councilmember Braunstein expressed support for Mr. Ashby and Mr. Hayes. He pointed out that Ms. Tran is still new on the commission and she expressed a desire for more in-depth discussions and supplemental reports for a deeper understanding. He noted there is no clear-cut distinction between her and Ms. Homisak.

Councilmember Stone expressed concern that Ms. Tran was not ready to answer questions regarding the Brown Act even though she has had orientation. He pointed out that Ms. Homisak has been involved in the community, most notably the schools. He noted that her background is in finance, and Ms. Tran's is in accounting.

Discussion ensued.

Council concurred that the panel interview was a more beneficial process than ballots for selection of commissioners.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Stone, seconded by Councilmember Braunstein, Resolution 2014-025 Appointing Steve Hayes, Dick Ashby, Delores Homisek to the Belmont Finance Commission for three-year terms expiring in March of 2017 was unanimously approved (3-0, Reed absent).

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Perry Kennan, Belmont resident, stated that this was a good process but there was too much detail about ethics. Commissioners are able to express opinions.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 9:35 p.m.

**Terri Cook
City Clerk**

Meeting audio-recorded but not videotaped